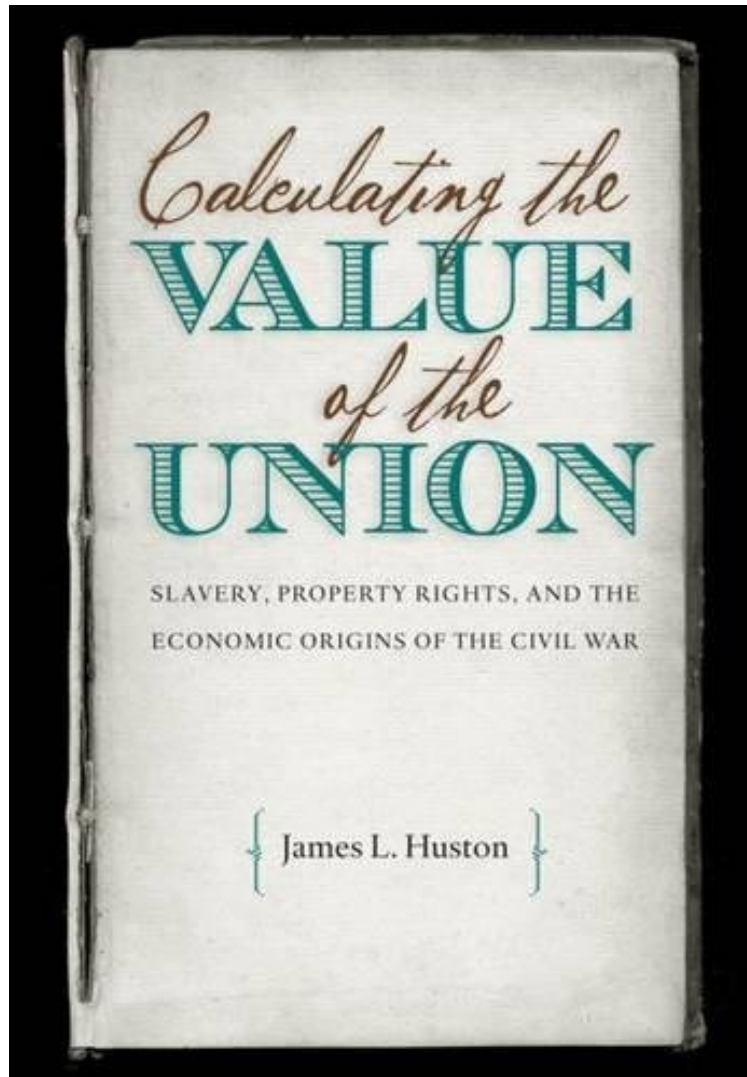


(Mobile book) Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War (Civil War America)

## Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War (Civil War America)

*James L. Huston*

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**James L. Huston : Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War (Civil War America)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War (Civil War America):

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of slavery and political deliberations about slavery in Congress, what moved the Southern States particularly, South Carolina, to calculate it was time to secede from the United States? James Huston delineates that when historians add to the calculation property rights of slaves, you find the catalyst. "At the root of the controversy over slavery was the wealth invested in slavery. Remove the wealth, and the controversy, like a Cheshire Cat, fades away with a knowing grin" (66). Like the Biblical root of evil, money was at the root of the Civil War. This book continues Huston's theory developed in "Securing the Fruits of Labor." These are landmark books that helped me as an American Black understand the period surrounding the Civil War. Huston is to be applauded for scholarship that heals national tensions by using excellent research, primary sources and by developing within his book a theory that includes all peoples. His theory developed in appendices AB deserves an award. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A fresh approach to the Civil War .By Hill Country AdjunctHuston brings thorough, thoughtful research and very suggestive themes to his work. Every student of the Civil War needs to consider his opinions. Both sides of the debate will find this volume useful. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. The heart of the questionBy James W. DurneyWhat caused the Civil War? Debates on this question occur, with passion, daily on blogs and boards across the Internet. Slavery, states' rights, industrial vs. agricultural, Southern expansion or Northern morality is the cause. Each has supporters and detractors, convinced that the other side is comprised of thickheaded fools or worse. A widely held view is slavery caused the South refusal to accept Lincoln's election in 1860 and secession lead to war. A problem with this idea is why the South refused to accept the results of the 1860 election in the face of Republican statements not attempting to change the status of existing slave states.James L. Huston steps into the arena fully prepared to answer questions and defend his position. Without taking a moral stance, he demonstrates the South's reason for making secession the answer in the years leading to 1860. This is not one sided, the author follows the North's logical paths to a position that makes secession popular in the South. While the idea that we fight wars for high moral purposes is comforting, the truth is that self-interest, fear and political advantage are the major reasons for war. The author clearly demonstrates that the South had realistic fears of the majority depriving them of their property in slaves. These fears are understandable in light of the North's increasing anti-slavery position. The book traces the myriad logical paths the North followed to this position. The most common being the fact that slave labor reduced wages for and debased free labor's standing in the community. Hard economic and social reality is bolstered by the idea of slavery violation of the natural rights to the fruits of one's labor.A complex book containing many ideas makes for a slow but not a dull read. You will want to take the time to study the many charts graphs, check the footnotes and consider the author's positions. The writing is academic in style but is not unreadable or boring. The book looks at the critical period from 1840 to Lincoln's election. The problems of westward expansion, fall of the Whigs, rise of Abolition and Secession are in a cohesive narrative bolster by charts and graphs. This makes for a challenging and thought provoking reading experience that will leave you richer for the effort.

While slavery is often at the heart of debates over the causes of the Civil War, historians are not agreed on precisely what aspect of slavery--with its various social, economic, political, cultural, and moral ramifications--gave rise to the sectional rift. In *Calculating the Value of the Union*, James Huston integrates economic, social, and political history to argue that the issue of property rights as it pertained to slavery was at the center of the Civil War. In the early years of the nineteenth century, southern slaveholders sought a national definition of property rights that would recognize and protect their ownership of slaves. Northern interests, on the other hand, opposed any national interpretation of property rights because of the threat slavery posed to the northern free labor market, particularly if allowed to spread to western territories. This impasse sparked a process of political realignment that culminated in the creation of the Republican Party, ultimately leading to the secession crisis. Deeply researched and carefully written, this study rebuts recent trends in antebellum historiography and persuasively argues for a fundamentally economic interpretation of the slavery issue and the coming of the Civil War.

"Readers will appreciate this book's exhaustive treatment of the role that property rights played in the demise of the Second Party System and the coming of the Civil War." -- "American Historical " Huston's work provides a valuable synthesis of economic ideas and their role in the Civil War. . . . Huston profitably synthesizes the many strands of antebellum economic thinking and offers a fresh and intriguing perspective on the war.--Journal of Illinois HistoryHuston expertly dissects the political rhetoric to reveal that antebellum Americans primarily put forward differing conceptions of property when debating slavery.--Journal of Southern HistoryIt will surely stand as a lasting contribution to the ever-expounding literature on the causes of the sectional schism. . . . *Calculating the Winds of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economics Origins of the Civil War* is another large step toward answering exactly how slavery caused the Civil War.--Georgia Historical QuarterlyFor persuasively conveying the eminence of property rights in the drive toward secession and the Civil War, and for its engaging literary style, [this] book is strongly recommended.--The HistorianNo historian writing today surpasses James L. Huston in breadth of research or in analytical power. In *Calculating the Value of the Union*, he undertakes the daunting task of presenting a fresh interpretation of the causes of America's Civil War and succeeds wonderfully. This book will have a major impact on

our understanding of the sectional conflict.--Stanley Harrold, author of *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865* Readers will appreciate this book's exhaustive treatment of the role that property rights played in the demise of the Second Party System and the coming of the Civil War.--*American Historical* After a considerable period of neglect, the origins of the Civil War are back on the historical agenda, and James Huston's foray into this subject is extremely welcome.--*Civil War History* About the Author James L. Huston is professor of history at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. His books include *Securing the Fruits of Labor: The American Concept of Wealth Distribution, 1765-1900*.